

LITTERATURE

Biannual Newsletter

Summer 2005

FEATURED GROUP

Each Litterature features an outstanding Adopt-A-Highway group (AAH). If you would like to share your group's story, please call 1-800-331-5864 and ask for George.

Marine Corp League, Sandhills Area Detachment 1001 of Moore County

The Sandhills area is known for being a friendly community that embraces the game of golf and all those who visit – regardless of whether or not they play.

There is another facet that is not as visible unless you're there during an event like a high school football game, a 4th of July parade or the passing of a fellow Marine. It's the comradeship, patriotism and pride of serving the community as a member of the Marine Corps League (MCL).

The MCL Detachment 1001 has been in the Sandhills for a number of years. During this period, some 48 members have been active in performing various Color Guard missions primarily at civic events, like



the 75th Anniversary of the Cub Scouts and funerals of fellow Marines and other servicemen.

The members are US Marines both active and retired. The MCL has some 60,000 members nationwide.

Along with the flag details, they are active in the Toys for Tots Program that has been in existence since 1948. More than 6,000 toys were distributed to children in the Sandhills area last year.

John Harding, past Commandant of Detachment 1001, knew of the Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) Program and felt it was a good fit as a civic program. He met with Blaine Ritter, the NCDOT AAH Coordinator for Moore County. Shortly after their meeting, a nearby roadway became available to adopt. The MCL Detachment adopted the two-mile section of US 1 from SR 1309 to NC 2 in Southern Pines.

The MCL AAH group is led by the present Commandant, Robert Ebel. The group has been picking up litter along their route since the summer of 2000. Robert renewed their agreement in June 2004.

The MCL AAH group gets together quarterly for their cleanup. It all

begins with the group going to breakfast. The 18-20 participants will work for two hours picking up roadside litter. They average from 20 to 30 bags of litter during each cleanup along their stretch of roadway.

In addition to their Spring Litter Sweep pick up, the MCL AAH group plans to make a special effort to do another cleanup on June 11th. This is a week prior to the US Open, being played at nearby Pinehurst Country Club.

The majority of the litter found along their roadside is made up of fast food wrappers, drink containers, tire treads, newspapers and magazines.

What are the most unusual items found? Various types of clothing from socks and shoes to golf hats and golf balls.

All of us in the Office of Beautification Programs salute the Sandhills area Marine Corps League for their efforts.

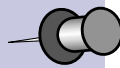


L to R: Charles Setzer, Albert Haebe, Robert Ebel and John Harding

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STORMWATER FACTS



1. *What's stormwater?* Stormwater is water from rain or other forms of precipitation that flows from rooftops, paved areas, bare soil and sloped lawns.

2. *Is stormwater clean?* As it flows over the land, stormwater runoff collects and transports sediment, pet waste, automobile fluids, deicing products, yard waste, cigarette butts and other litter. Unlike wastewater, stormwater is not treated before it goes into our waterways.

volunteers picked up more than 10 million pounds of litter.

- The Adopt-A-Highway groups picked up 3.7 million pounds of litter of which 240,000 pounds was recycled.

- Statewide, the State Highway Patrol issued 1,158 citations for improper loading/covering of vehicle - offense code 4425 of GS 20-116(g) and 655 citations for littering less than 15 pounds offense code 5372 of GS14-399(c).

- Statewide, the local police officers issued 283 citations for improper loading/covering of vehicle - offense code 4425 of GS 20-116(g) and 1,244 citations for littering less than 15 pounds offense code 5372 of GS 14-399(c).

- More than 6,600 citizens were reported through the Swat-A-Litterbug Program for littering while using their vehicle.

If you desire more information, go to the Office of Beautification Programs web site at www.ncdot.org/~beautification and click on the Current Events/News link to find the 2004 Year-end Litter Report.

BEFORE YOU PICK UP TRASH REMEMBER TO:

- Check out two "Litter Pickup In Progress" caution signs from your NCDOT county maintenance office. Each sign is designed to bolt on your sign post.
- Put on orange safety vests before arriving at work site so you are immediately visible when you exit a vehicle.
- Review safety rules prior to a cleanup.
- Face oncoming traffic while picking up litter and work in small groups.
- Have water and small snacks available.
- Wear sturdy shoes to protect yourself from sharp objects and uneven terrain.
- Never open a closed container because you do not know what is inside.
- Do not attempt to bag tires, dead animals or large or heavy items. Instead flag the items with an orange bag and notify DOT of the location.
- Do not pick up near road construction sites or on medians, bridges, overpasses or tunnels.
- Have a first aid kit available and know the route to the nearest medical facility.

2004 LITTER STATS

- North Carolina Department of Transportation (NCDOT) maintains 78,615 miles of roadway.
- NCDOT expended more than \$15 million dollars in litter cleanups.
- NCDOT crews, Adopt-A-Highway groups, Department of Correction inmate crews, Community Service Work Program participants and other

STATE HIGHWAY PATROL PARTICIPATES IN "LITTER SWEEP"

The N.C. State Highway Patrol has joined the N.C. Department of Transportation to crackdown on litterbugs and help keep litter off of North Carolina's roads. Operation Litter Sweep ran from April 16-30th. Troopers increased their efforts to enforce the state's litter laws and issued 143 citations during this two-week period.

When motorists see someone littering, they can dial *HP on their cellular telephones to be connected to the nearest Highway Patrol communications center. Dispatchers will take the violator's license plate number, a description of the vehicle and the location of the littering. Troopers will then try to catch the litterbug in the act.

Tougher littering laws passed by the N.C. General Assembly went into effect on March 1, 2002. First-time offenders can be fined as much as \$1,000 and be ordered to perform up to 24 hours of community service.

The Department of Transportation's Office of Beautification Programs also maintains a website where litterbug reports can be submitted by going to <http://www.ncdot.org/~litterbug>.

FINDERS KEEPERS?

We've all heard of the saying, "finders keepers, losers weepers!" The finders in this story turned out to be Good Samaritans instead.

On January 15, Boy Scout Troop 18 of the Mineral Springs United Methodist Church were participating in a litter cleanup in Union County. The cleanup is in memory of their former leader, Hank Linker.

The nine scouts and five leaders found some unusual litter scattered along the roadway. As they investigated, they found a bucket of quarters totaling \$300!

The scouts notified the authorities. When the sheriff heard the story, he was in shock at the discovery. He linked the bucket of quarters to a recent home robbery. As Good Samaritans the scouts returned the bucket with all its quarters.

"Finders keepers, losers weepers" in this story turned out to have nine scouts enhance their character with a good deed.

Our thanks to Mike Whitley and Troop 18 for doing the right thing.

AAH Coordinator Profile

Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator of the Year!

By George Kapetanakis (GK)

Blaine Ritter

Title: Transportation Technician IV

Division: 8

Counties: Hoke, Lee and Moore

Location: Aberdeen

Years as AAH Coordinator: 9

Blaine Ritter like so many others in the Adopt-A-Highway (AAH) Coordinator position wears many hats in his day-to-day responsibilities within the N.C. Department of Transportation (NCDOT). Currently, as Transportation Technician IV, Blaine is involved in right-of-way encroachment, driveway permits (both commercial and residential) and small projects.

Blaine started his career with NCDOT in December of 1991 as Transportation Technician Aide. He was part of a survey crew and worked on secondary roads through the District Office. In November 1996 he was promoted to a Transportation Technician IV, and accepted the responsibilities of Adopt-A-Highway Coordinator for Hoke, Lee and Moore counties.

I met Blaine for the first time in February 2005 while preparing to meet with the local Kiwanis Club. Everyone was planning for the June 2005 U.S. Open golf event.

I revisited Blaine in March to discuss Litter Sweep and other local roadside cleanups planned for June just before the tourists arrive in Pinehurst for the 2005 Open.

Here are the questions and answers from our discussion:

GK: Tell me about the number of road miles in your three counties and how this relates to the number of Adopt-A-Highway groups you have.



BR: One of the main components to maintaining a strong AAH program involves adding more new groups to the program than rotate out each year. Fortunately, my area has been on the positive side.

GK: How about the number of groups you administer?

BR: Currently I have 185 AAH groups with 31 groups in Hoke County, 44 groups in Lee County and 110 in Moore County. These groups have adopted 385 miles with 70 miles being adopted in Hoke, 95 miles in Lee and 220 miles in Moore. Last year the groups reported picking up 87,000 pounds of litter.

GK: What are some of the challenges you face?

BR: One challenge is getting 100% of the AAH groups to report the amount of litter they pick up during the year. Individuals will often pick up the litter and then discard the bags on their own. Consequently, they do not report. Reporting all amounts picked up gives us a better perspective on the actual amount of trash being discarded on the roads.

Another challenge is finding new groups to adopt roadsides in the more rural part of the counties. Doing so would really help keep the roads much cleaner throughout the three-county area. Good examples of these roads are Samarcand Road in

Moore County, US 15-501 in Lee County and US 401 in Hoke County.

GK: What are you doing to prepare for the US Open?

BR: Thankfully we have Spring Litter Sweep coming up and that will help give us a boost in getting the majority of the litter off the roadsides. The Department of Correction inmates, our NCDOT crews, AAH groups and other volunteers, such as Keep Moore County Beautiful, will be out for another cleanup prior to the start of the US Open. We expect more than 100,000 will attend this golf event.

GK: Blaine what is the most unusual litter found in your area?

BR: Appliances and old furniture are certainly on the list.

Blaine, from all of us in the NCDOT and the Office of Beautification Programs we congratulate you on your many years of dedicated service to the NCDOT, the AAH program and the AAH groups. We also want to thank all of the Adopt-A-Highway groups in Hoke, Lee and Moore counties for keeping their part of North Carolina roadsides clean, green and safe for everyone to enjoy.

ADOPT-A-HIGHWAY GROUPS ATTAIN 10 AND 15 YEAR STATUS.

If your AAH group began in 1990, please accept our sincere gratitude and appreciation for your group's commitment and dedication.

The 15-year groups will receive a 15-year star to be placed on their signs to indicate their consecutive years of participation. The 10-year groups will receive a special plaque and a 10-year star.

Our appreciation also goes to all of the Adopt-A-Highway volunteers who have maintained their adopted roadsides since 1988.

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LITTERATURE

DATES TO REMEMBER

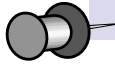
MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 5
Labor Day

SEPT. 17 - OCT. 1
Fall Litter Sweep

OCTOBER 14-23
NC State Fair

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 11
Veterans Day

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24
Thanksgiving



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